

# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development

## Employment Drops in August as Summer Jobs End

August is the month when temperatures climb not employment. In fact, the opposite happens. According to labor force estimates for the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area and the West Central region released by the Department of Workforce Development employment declined and unemployment increased in the local area in August. The only thing unusual about the increase in unemployment is that it was smaller than usual.

In the Eau Claire-Chippewa metro area, the unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, rose from 4.8 percent in July to 5.1 percent in August. However, the current rate is still lower than the 5.3 percent unemployment rate last August. The Wisconsin unemployment rate also rose in August to 5.2 percent from 4.8 percent in July and from 4.5 percent one year ago.

All of the state's eleven metropolitan areas reported higher unemployment in August, as did 32 of the 72 counties. Metropolitan estimates are seasonally adjusted while county estimates are not. Contrarily, the unadjusted unemployment rates for the counties of Chippewa and Eau Claire of 4.7 and 4.0 percent, respectively, placed them among the 32 counties in the state where the rate increased from July to August. However, the unemployment rates in six of the seven rural counties in the West Central region declined in August and triggered the drop in the regional rate from 4.6 in July to 4.5 in August.

August is an active month for labor force participants. It might be assumed that since we are at the height of summer, employment would also be at its hiatus. However, total employment in the metro area declined from 80,600 in July to 80,200 in August

and the West Central region, employment dropped from 224,200 in July to 220,100 in August. Two industry divisions reported the greatest job reductions, services and government, but employers in nearly every industry division reported losses.

Employers in both services and government hire many workers in June to work in recreation and athletic programs, conduct field trips and research, tutor summer students, and spruce-up landscaping. Most of these activities end by August. Temporary agencies also hire extra workers to help area employers during June and July.

The job reductions from other industries reflect the loss of summer workers who leave early to return to school. Those summer workers include not only students, but also teachers who find jobs during the summer months but need to take a few weeks off before classes resume.

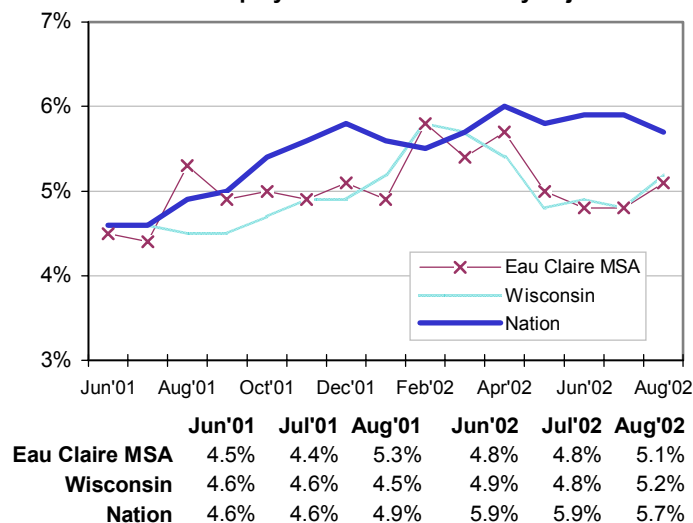
The result is not only a reduction in the number of jobs in the area in August, but also a slight increase in the number of unemployed. Some of the region's counties though bucked this trend and reported more jobs in August.

The number of manufacturing jobs increased in Barron and St. Croix counties as additional workers were hired to process vegetables. Manufacturing employment increased by 260 in the

region primarily because of this activity. Every other county reported no increase, or a decline in the number of production jobs.

Two areas in the region continue to suffer from a loss in production employment. The metro area is down nearly 1,000 production jobs from last August and St. Croix County has lost nearly 250 production

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



jobs in the last twelve months.

The loss of full-time production jobs is one of the reasons that the unemployment rate in St. Croix County had the greatest increase in the state over the twelve-month period. The current rate in St. Croix County of 5.7 percent is 2.3 percentage points higher than one year ago. The county is now ranked 12<sup>th</sup> highest in the state rather than ranking among the lowest in the state.

The number of unemployment compensation claims has also risen in St. Croix County. During the August survey week there were 425 claims filed for unem-

ployment benefits, 200 more than were filed during the same week one year earlier. Since mid-August the number of claims has declined.

Claims for unemployment benefits remain higher than last year in both the rural counties of the region and in the metro area. In the rural counties, there were 2,537 claims filed in mid-August, roughly 500 more than twelve months earlier while in the metro area in August there were 2,161 claims, 240 more than one year ago. In both areas the number of claims is declining as fall approaches.

<b>August 2002 Estimates</b>									
<b>Not seasonally adjusted</b>	Wisconsin	EC MSA	Barron	Clark	Dunn	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	3,089,600	84,200	24,400	15,800	21,800	3,100	21,600	23,800	35,800
Employed	2,942,900	80,600	23,400	15,100	21,000	3,000	20,700	22,600	33,700
Unemployed	146,800	3,600	1,000	800	700	200	900	1,100	2,000
Unemployment rate(%)	4.7%	4.3%	4.3%	5.0%	3.4%	4.9%	4.2%	4.8%	5.7%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	2,850,500	75,800	21,800	9,900	15,100	2,100	10,700	15,300	28,700
Construction & Mining	139,780	4,500	930	740	740	180	520	870	1,800
Manufacturing	577,170	11,410	6,880	3,120	2,370	150	1,350	4,580	7,320
Transportation & Public Util.	129,980	3,320	680	430	520	90	510	490	1,070
Wholesale Trade	138,590	3,340	590	510	630	260	210	400	700
Retail Trade	514,440	17,160	4,240	1,310	4,090	500	2,350	2,810	6,420
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	154,640	2,920	420	240	450	70	320	480	1,030
Services	813,630	22,720	3,960	1,710	2,860	410	2,230	3,270	7,120
Government	382,280	10,430	4,120	1,900	3,420	470	3,240	2,350	3,200
<b>Change from previous month</b>									
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	-27,000	-1,700	-300	-400	-200	-100	-500	-300	-1,000
Employed	-27,000	-1,700	-300	-400	-200	0	-500	-200	-800
Unemployed	0	0	0	0	0	0	-100	-100	-200
Unemployment rate(%)	0.0%	0.1%	-0.1%	0.3%	-0.1%	-0.5%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.4%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	4,300	-900	100	-100	100	0	300	0	300
Construction & Mining	-500	-100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	2,170	-50	60	-10	0	0	-10	-20	280
Transportation & Public Util.	840	10	10	0	0	10	-10	0	10
Wholesale Trade	360	-10	-10	-10	-10	0	-20	-10	0
Retail Trade	2,880	-90	-40	0	100	0	30	-10	-10
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	-120	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	20
Services	4,770	-350	-20	-10	30	0	-10	0	0
Government	-6,090	-400	70	-70	-60	0	300	20	-20
<b>Change from one year ago</b>									
<b>Civilian Labor Force*</b>	65,300	400	300	-500	400	-100	400	500	1,100
Employed	43,700	600	100	-500	400	-100	100	300	200
Unemployed	21,600	-100	200	0	0	0	300	100	800
Unemployment rate(%)	0.6%	-0.2%	0.8%	-0.1%	0.1%	0.5%	1.3%	0.5%	2.2%
<b>Total jobs, all industries**</b>	11,000	-100	200	0	400	0	600	200	700
Construction & Mining	2,500	500	-100	100	0	0	100	0	200
Manufacturing	-13,200	-910	-20	-20	50	-10	10	-60	-240
Transportation & Public Util.	-2,240	-40	30	20	10	0	-30	0	10
Wholesale Trade	-960	120	10	-30	0	-10	-10	10	60
Retail Trade	2,090	-170	-60	30	30	10	60	60	430
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	2,720	130	-10	0	30	0	0	20	90
Services	21,790	480	100	-10	50	10	0	90	350
Government	-1,670	-170	280	-110	170	-10	500	10	-280

\* Includes participants residing in area. \*\* Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

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